

National Catholic Theater Conference

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Of course you're bringing our theater to the Servicemen who are with us - some of you in a big way. For example, Loretto Academy in El Paso gave six performances of "Girls of the U.S.A." at the surrounding camps. Sister Felician puts it, "we're always doing something." And often performances are for special benefits, such as Mother Spallen's production by the Barat Association for USO snack suppers.

We've known you were doing the work; we are eager to have that contribution made a matter of record. Last month, at the recommendation of your Executive Committee, we agreed to encourage in every way possible the cooperation of our members with USO and its branches in the field of servicemen's entertainment.

There is no intention of committing group or director to specific dates or productions. The extent of your cooperation depends solely on you and the arrangements you make with the local USO director. Details of transportation, reimbursement for expenses, possible cooperation with other community units, etc., are problems that must be solved locally.

If, with this understanding, you wish us to submit your name to the Dramatic Specialist, USO National Headquarters, as a Conference Member who would like to contribute special performances of your regular productions, the services of individuals as stage helpers - briefly, in any way - write us immediately. Our only idea is to give credit to those who are helping.

Among the members arriving with 1944 are two recently organized groups: The Catholic Youth Center of Great Falls, Montana, and the St. Genesius Players Guild, Montreal, Quebec. Both groups, though starting from scratch with equipment and experience, have a headstart in their theater-minded sponsors. Father Dubee of Montreal proved, in fact, that even Broadway wasn't too much for him -- he saw "Oklahoma" and "Othello" on his recent New York visit.

The Edgecliff Players of Our Lady of Cincinnati College, recent unit members, with "Letters to Lucerne" and "Ladies in Retirement" on their schedule last year, are searching for a new hit.

Mother Spallen, R.S.C.J., Barat Association, Eden Hall, Philadelphia, has started a chain of Conference memberships. And it isn't that she hasn't more work than two hands can do now with special USO and orphanage productions. With others following her example the Conference could double its membership in no time. We can prove it: Mother Spallen referred G. Marston Haddock to the Conference; Mr. Haddock is referring the Conference to the five schools where he is instructor in Speech and Dramatics.

Mount Carmel Academy of Wichita - Sister Mary Xavier was one of our first Library patrons -- has an envelope that perks us up mid-winter in New York. The face of the envelope is given entirely to a bird's eye view of Mount Carmel's campus.

Fast workers these Cameo Players of Immaculate Conception Academy, Davenport, Iowa. A January 2nd letter asked for information; by the 26th they were enrolled as members and library patrons, and play copies were already on the way for reading. Sister Mary Angelita, B.V.M., is their director.

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Courtney Savage, Executive Committee Member, is on leave from his post as NCCS Director of Public Relations for a special assignment to the Radio Section of the Army Special Service Division. Mr. Savage had worked from his Washington NCCS headquarters since 1941.

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College groups unfamiliar with Players Magazine have a treat in store for them. Published by National Collegiate Players, 227 Hynds Building, Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Even our South American neighbors won't be confused by our use of the plural, the Conference collects NEWS these days.

Charles Costello, Conference President, anticipates a stop-off at St. Mary's to see Mr. Walsh, S.J., member of the Mid-West Play Reading Committee, on his way to a Diocesan Catholic Theater Convention at Wichita. At St. Mary's now, too, is Mr. Stanley, S.J. formerly director of the Loyola College Play Shop, Montreal, whose work has carried the dramatic banners heretofore in that city.

The last, and to us most exciting session of the War Problems Conference of National Association of Teachers of Speech held in New York, December 28 - 30, was the joint meeting of participating associations with Council for Democracy. Barrett Clark, heading the committee to spur writing by authentic dramatists of play propagating faith in democracy, presided at the first testing of three of these plays and plainly asked for criticism. Sister M. Antonia of Sacred Heart High School, Yonkers, N.Y. directed for the program "This Place Called Freedom" by Howard Fast and Robert Ardrey, set in a farmer's cottage 1777, when service for our country also meant sacrifice. Another High School group presented a school room scene in a cave in China, "The Rock" by Pearl Buck. Norman Corwin's "Untitled" created the biggest stir with its cemetery setting for the burial of an American soldier. If you are looking for an emotional statement of the need for planning to avert World War III, this is it. Don't be misled by the static appearance of the script - the sequence of bald testimonials of the hero's doctor, mother, teacher, sweetheart and pallbearer rises to a crescendo. Brooklyn College Masquers gave the performance on December 30th with drapes, lights, and off-stage voice from the casket. Is it the play that is brutal, or war? Not high school entertainment.

"Embezzled Heaven," the pre-"Bernadette" Werfel story, is scheduled for Broadway production next fall.

Mrs. Wyatt: "Doctors Disagree" is perfect for Little Theaters and jam for amateurs because it offers the whole cast real roles." That those are divided 4 (M) and 6 (F) has us sitting with our crackers ready even though the play's Broadway run was brief. Watch for announcement of publication.

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FEBRUARY'S SCHEDULE

Minneapolis -- Thespian Troupe, Holy Angels Academy, celebrates National Drama Week; Fourth War Loan Drive in earnest. Junior Victory Players open with "It's a Ming," three act comedy; play Feb. 3--6, Senior Victory Players contribute three one act plays, Feb. 10--13, and Dramatic Art and Choral Classes present musical pageant, "Sharing America," on February 15th. (Can Sister Charitas be busy?)

Hartford, Conn. -- Queens' Company, St. Joseph College, turning from comedy this year, have chosen "Romeo and Juliet" for the annual Shakespearean production, on February 11th.

El Paso, Texas -- Cast of the Senior Play Loretto Academy is thoroughly enjoying rehearsals of "Mrs. Miniver". Production date February 13th.

New York -- Blackfriars' Guild announce another exciting original - "Caukey", a drama by Rev. Thomas McGlynn - the run February 17th to 27th to be extended as justified.

Dubuque -- Loras College Players are hard at work on new adaptation of Peman's "A Saint in a Hurry," a dramatization of St. Francis Xavier's mission.

Convent, N.J. -- Passion Play Production Group of Passaic in its first of twenty-seven road engagements of "His Master's Promise" - at the College of St. Elizabeth on February 24th.

Dayton, Ohio -- Blackfriars' have chosen "Master of Nazareth" for their Lenten production.

TO DONORS AND USERS

Thank you for your enthusiastic response to the new library.

Yes, the library is already in use, and library patrons are proving the extraordinary Conference brand of cooperation by returning borrowed copies before due.

The latest additions to our shelves (we have five empty ones waiting to be filled with those plays you produced last month and last year) are listed on the separate sheet enclosed. Keep it with your January lists for a complete record.

If you haven't determined which Lenten Play you will do this year, why not use the Library service. There are several that don't require 25 men.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To the unknown benefactor who sent us the November issue of Liturgical Arts we beam 'thank you.' Its article "Liturgy and the Theatre" by Rev. William F. Lynch, S.J., is a contribution to theater history.

Brother Philip, Saint Mary's College, Winona, Minn., has sent us the original script and score of "This Is the Navy," including a skit of six scenes "Navy Blues", with permission granted for its use by any Conference member. With Brother Philip's V-12 unit at Saint Mary's the revue was a great success.

Therese Marie Cuny is again serving the Conference as reporter for the Chicago district.

To catch up on long over-due acknowledgments we cite the Sophomore Victory Players of the Academy of the Holy Angels, Minneapolis, for their war-effort program, "Only Ten Per Cent" and "Jessie's Journey." On January 28th the entire Academy collaborated on a Carnival - admission by War Bonds and Stamps only.

Genevieve Sullivan, Executive Committee Member and President of the San Francisco Catholic Theatre Guild, had her own Theater for Victory Week in December when her high school group produced "The Devil and Daniel Webster." Admissions, by War Bonds only, accounted for over \$4,000 in bonds.

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The 150 members of the Detroit Catholic Theatre Guild's offspring, The Children's Stage, are glorying in extra performances at home and road assignments every Saturday. In between they follow parliamentary practice in their self-governing body and take on radio shows. "Peck's Bad Boy" started the snowball; production of "Seven Little Rebels", January 15th and 22nd, added several layers of snow well packed down with the response from all Detroit.

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Fred Karem of Catholic Theatre Guild, Louisville, brings us up to date by reporting two productions for the Guild - "Charlie's Aunt" and "Smilin' Through," the latter on January 21st. Among the originals on their schedule were a war play with Christmas theme and several radio dramas.

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PAST AND PRESENT

From the Dramatists Alliance of Stanford University we have received an index of the plays of the American Theater included in George W. Poultney Manuscript Collection. Students of the history of American theater would find even these brief notes exhilarating.

Catholic University's Season Americana has already brought to life three of the old favorites in the Poultney list: "The Contrast", "Rip Van Winkle" and "Girl of the Golden West." A third, "Secret Service", is scheduled for February 9--18th, and the annual musical, "Sing Out, Sweet Land", will top the season at the end of May.

NEW ASSIGNMENT

Courtenay Savage, Executive Committee Member, is on leave from his post as NCCS Director of Public Relations for a special assignment to the Radio Section of the Army Special Service Division. Mr. Savage had worked from his Washington NC-CS headquarters since 1941.

Though his address is now Los Angeles, Mr. Savage continues to give the Conference the benefit of his wide experience.

OLD WANG

Two seminaries, both St. Joseph's by name, are thrilled with productions of "Old Wang," the Gheen shorter-than-full-length play set in China which was translated for the Conference by Sister Constantia. Its all male cast and missionary message has special appeal for seminary groups, but it should be better known to all the men's colleges. St. Joseph's at Yonkers is using radio technique, interpreting the play behind a stage set to suggest the Chinese scene.

IN THE HEADLINES

The New York Blackfriars' aren't announcing the theme of their February production -- just "its theme makes headlines in the press every day." And if the Friars' enthusiasm is any indication, the press will be giving space to the play too.

Broadway, incidentally, is still awaiting the commercial production of "Career Angel". Its new owners have been at work on production details, but no opening date set.

LIBRARY ADDITIONS (See Separate Sheet for More Titles)

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Publisher</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Sets</u>	<u>Type</u>
Solo Flight	Helen Monsell	Drama Pub Co	3	4	int	Comedy
Square Crooks	J. P. Judge	Longmans G	6	5	int	Comedy
Successful Calamity, A	Clare Kummer	French	9	3	int	Comedy
Sun Up	Lula Vollmer	Brentanos	7	2	int	
Swan, The	Ferenc Molnar	Longmans G	9	8	1set	Rom Drama
Tailor Made Man, A	Harry James Smith	French	20	8	3int	Comedy
Tavern, The	George M. Cohan	Frency	10	4	int	Mys-Com
Thank You	Smith & Cushing	French	14	5	int	Comedy
Time for Romance	Alice Gerstenberg	Dram Pub Co		10	int	Comedy
Too Much Johnson	William Gillette	French	10	3	2int	
Tidings Brought to Mary	Paul Claudel	Dubuque Adap-MSS				Rel Dram
Tweddles	Tarkington & Wilson	French	5	4	int	Comedy
Under Cover	Roi Cooper Megrue	French	8	5	3int	Drama
Victim of the Seal	Rev.F.L.Kenzel,CSSR	Ave Maria				
What Happened to Jones	G. H. Broadhurst	French	7	6	int	Farce
Where's Grandma	Wayne & Sprague	Eldridge Entertainment House				
Why Smith Left Home	G. H. Broadhurst	French	5	7	2int	Farce
Witching Hour, The	Augustus Thomas	French	12	4	3int	Drama
Within These Walls	Marcus Bach	Dram Pub Co				Rel Dram
Woman's Hour, The	Frederick Paulding	French	5	4	in-ex	
Wren, The	Booth Tarkington	French	4	3	int	Comedy
Three Wise Fools	Austin Strong	French	11	2	int	Comedy

